

Linda Clair
Seven-day Meditation Retreat
Kallara Conference Centre, Australia – March 2019
Transcription from Audio Recordings

File 8b – Saturday morning discussion

Question: I just wanted to share a few things that have happened over the retreat with me that I feel to be significant, but I'm not sure, so feedback would be good. At the beginning of the retreat there was a time where I was trying to concentrate on breathing and things like that, and I could feel my mind wandering away and fantasising about futures and things, which were very attractive. And somewhere from deep within my body, it felt, came this instruction to be there, "be here now." And something happened, something shifted. And the rest of that sit was very here-now, or as much as I could be. And then a little while later in another sit I had this thing – I'd been counting and watching my breath – and at one point I stopped all of that and somehow opened myself up to the idea that you've been talking about, of the world of the "now" being this unfolding thing that happens. So I tried to open myself to that and try and feel, and be, in that "now," and be curious as things came towards me. And that too was really profound, for me anyway. And the final thing was that – it's happened a few times – where I've had this sense of being very grounded.

For me this meditation retreat has been about two things – being grounded and here-now. Those two things just keep resonating for me and I'm the most grounded I've ever been in my life right now – doesn't mean there's not more to come of course, but right now it feels really solid. But it's a solidness and a lightness at the same time, and a real sense of vibration in my whole body, concentrating mainly in this area. And when I've allowed myself to really sink into that I become really still. Thoughts are there but I just sink into this groundedness, this whatever is happening to me, and it's just been fantastic. And I think the reason it's happened too is, like many people here I've had lots of experiences in the past with different teachers and a lot of instability arose out of the stuff that I was doing, but this is very stable. It always has been right from the beginning. And I think that I may have been holding back a little bit, but I think this retreat I've finally surrendered and opened myself more to your teaching than I had before. So, thank you.

Linda: So all I can say is, "great."

Question: Just a quick question. Sometimes my cheek feels like it's sand, but sand falling away. And sometimes I get it in the whole structure of my cheekbones, just movement. What does that mean?

Linda: Well, you'll get various sensations like that. And I feel it means just a lack of attachment to the body, which comes from being more grounded in the body. And you'll get various sensations like that, sometimes sensations of feeling really big, expanded, other times very small. But it's just to do with letting go of the attachment to the body, which is the mind. I mean, the body is not the mind, but your perception of the body is through the mind. So letting go of that you do start to have certain sensations like that that feel a bit weird. So don't concentrate on it too much and analyse and wonder. I

remember I used to get stuff like that and go, “Oh, that’s really interesting,” and before you know it you’re caught up with the whole thing for the whole sit. So just feel it, go, “Oh, yes, that’s interesting,” and come back to your breath. Don’t repress it but don’t get into it too much either. Is it a nice sensation or weird?

Question: It’s enjoyable to notice it because to me it means there’s change – I think that’s what it means to me. I’m not afraid of it, or it’s not scary, it’s just really fascinating.

Linda: Well, be fascinated in everything that happens but don’t be too fascinated, don’t enjoy it too much. Because then you’ll start to want it more and try and fabricate things and repeat things. So never try and repeat anything. There was something else I was going to say but I’ve lost it now.

Question: I feel like – the sitting with a high determination in order to feel the pain, and just feeling your breath – I feel like they seem almost two different practices, for me, anyway. So I was wondering about integrating them. Or if I recognise that it feels more attainable to try and use the pain to stay here if I should focus on that, or if I should try and integrate them a bit more?

Linda: Try and integrate them a bit more. So, particularly if you’ve got quite a bit of pain, use the breath not as a separate thing or an avoidance but just to try and ground you and stabilise yourself so that you can put up with the pain. So, integrate them, don’t separate the two.

Question: I do that but I notice sometimes I’ll have periods where I feel intimate with the breath and it’s subtly very physical just by feeling the breath, but then times – and it can be months or whatever – where it feels like I can’t really do that. And then I’m thinking maybe I should let it all be messy and try and go for more...

Linda: Yes, let it be a bit messier. Because you’re very determined, which is a great quality in this, but you can also tend to be a little bit over-ordered as well, which I can relate to as well – not now but I used to be. So let that go a bit and allow it to be a bit messier than it is. You can’t really put this in a box and you can’t have a formula for it either. So you never know what’s going to happen. And as D. was saying, change, anything that changes, just don’t resist – change is great. And that’s why we’re doing this because we want to change, we want some sort of change. It won’t be the change that you think you want, and it won’t be ordered. You have to allow it to be a bit more seemingly chaotic.

But it’ll all be ordered in the end in a different way, but not in little boxes, so don’t put things in little boxes. And never focus on something exclusively. Because if you do that you’ll be ignoring other things and repressing other things, so don’t focus. But if you’ve got a lot of pain of course it’s going to dominate the whole thing and you can’t pretend it’s not there. But try not to focus on it. Use the breath to soften it a bit, to just soften it slightly. And sometimes it’ll work and sometimes it won’t – or it won’t appear to work, you won’t be able to soften it. All you’ll be able to do is survive the sitting. So yes, allow things to flow a bit more and don’t focus on anything. It’s a hard thing to do because we do get taught to focus on things from quite an early age – you know, “focus, concentrate, don’t get distracted,” all that sort of stuff.

Linda: How are you D.? I haven't spoken with you the whole retreat.

Question: I'm good thanks. It's been a good retreat. I'm sort of expecting to go away and see what's happened. I can't say at this stage what's happened and what's going on but in time it all plays out.

Linda: Yes, you don't notice what's happened usually until after.

Question: But I do feel like I've gone pretty deep on this one and I just feel a bit different even now. Thankyou Linda, and thankyou to everybody here. I found myself able to retrieve projections very often in this retreat, and it's a wonderful thing to fall in love with so many people.

Linda: I said that at the beginning: "By the end you'll be in love with everyone."

Funny story about a koala that I saw the other day: This winemaker was in his vineyard doing stuff and he had his dog with him, and he leaves his air conditioner on in the car and the door open so the dog could jump in and out. And he got in the car and looked around and there was a koala in the back. (With lots of ongoing laughter.) It's got of photo of it just sitting in the back, and he said he just couldn't get him out, he wanted to stay in the car, and the poor dog was too scared to get in. And there's a photo – a selfie – of him sitting in the driver's seat and the koala in the back.